

MASTER OF
KUNG FU

MARVEL COMICS GROUP™

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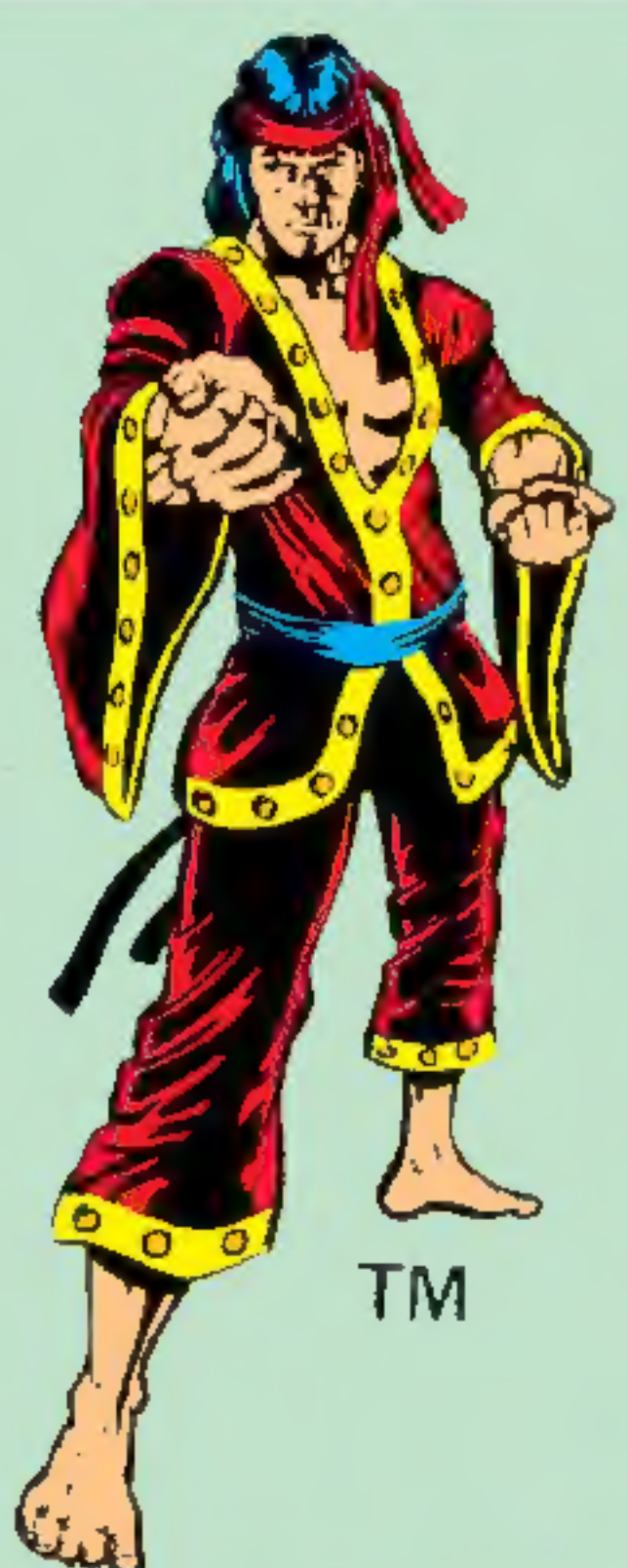


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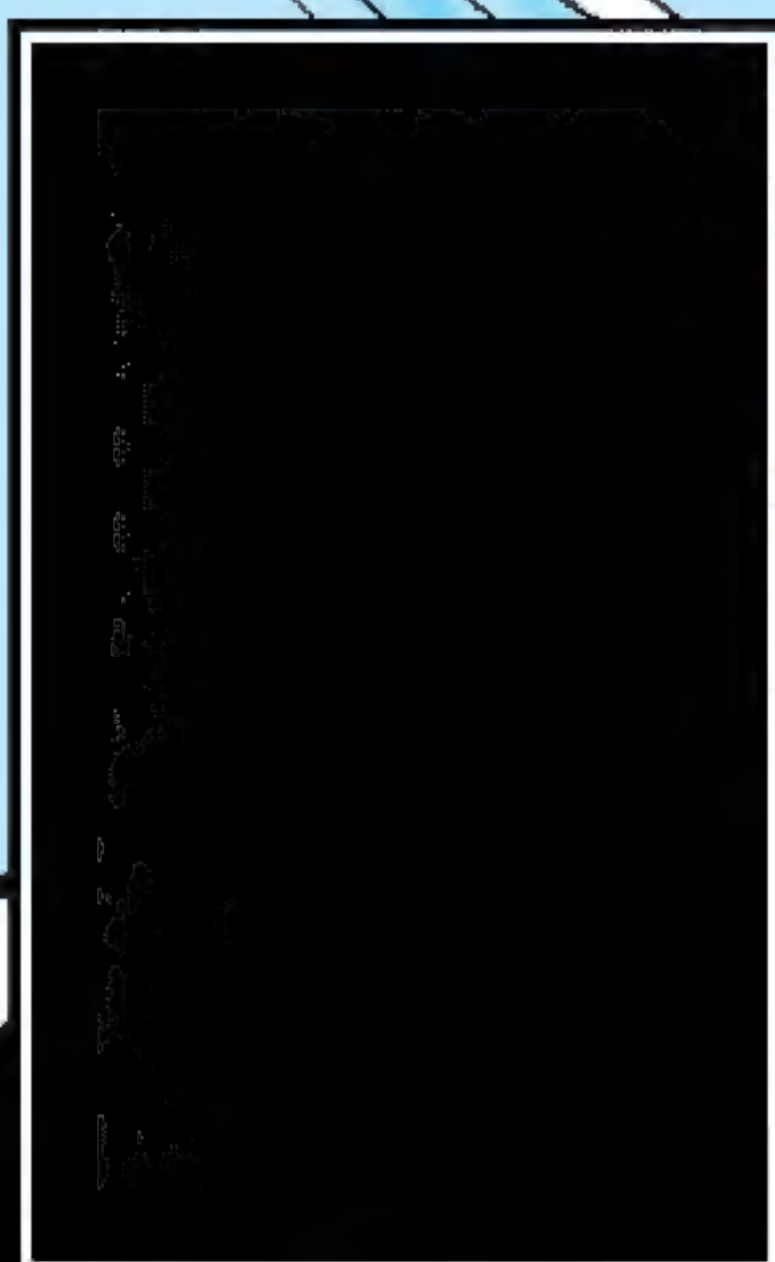


TM

THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU

**WAR IN
THE ARCTIC
WASTES!**
*SHANG-CHI
STANDS ALONE
AGAINST THE
FORCES OF
FU MANCHU!*

**THE COLD
WHITE
MANTLE OF
DEATH!**



Cockburn

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on earth...and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

"PART III (LEIKO WU): PHANTOM SAND"

OFFERED BY:

DOUG MOENCH
WRITER

PAUL GULACY
ARTIST

SHANG-CHI, LEIKO WU. TWO NAMES, HIS AND MINE. TWO SOUNDS. PERFECT. APPROPRIATE. AS IF WE HAD BEEN NAMED AT THIS VERY MOMENT RATHER THAN AT BIRTH.



PABLO MARCOS
INKER

JOE ROSEN
LETTERER

HUGH PALEY
COLORIST

ARCHIE GOODWIN
EDITOR

WE ARE **ALONE**, IN THE COMPANY OF **MANY**, EN ROUTE TO THE **ARCTIC**. STOWAWAYS IN FAH LO SUEE'S AIRCRAFT. UNINVITED **PARTICIPANTS** IN THE DEADLY SCHEME OF THE **DAUGHTER** OF **FU MANCHU**.

AND IF WE ARE **DISCOVERED**, WE WILL BE NOTHING BUT... **SHANG-CHI** AND **LEIKO WU**. NOTHING BUT TWO EXTREMELY APPROPRIATE, BUT EVENTUALLY FORGOTTEN, **NAMES**--

--OF PEOPLE WHO DIED TOO **YOUNG**, AND BEFORE THE FULL TASTE OF **LOVE**.

FEELS GOOD TO GET OUT OF THESE **EXPEDITERS MASKS**, EH?

TWO OF US WOULD NOT **KNOW**. THE TWO WHO ARE **ALONE**. WHO **MUST** BE.

YEAH, YOU COULD **SUFFOCATE** UNDER THOSE LOUSY THINGS.

--LAND **SHORT** OF OUR OBJECTIVE TO AVOID HIS **RADAR**.

YES, AND FINISH THE JOURNEY ON **FOOT**.

YOU TWO!

SHE KNOWS! SHE'S SEEN **THROUGH** OUR DISGUISES! WE'LL HAVE TO --

GO UP TO THE **CONTROL CABIN** AND RELIEVE THE **PILOTS** UNTIL WE ARE READY TO **LAND**.

FAH LO SUEE AND **GRISWOLD**. COMING STRAIGHT TOWARD US, DO THEY **SUSPECT**?

RELIEF. BUT HEART STILL **POUNDING**--WANTING TO **BURST**.

IN THE CABIN WE TRY TO LOOK **ARROGANT** AS THE **PILOTS** SURRENDER THEIR SEATS.

JUST HOLD HER **STEADY** AND MAINTAIN THE **PLOTTED COURSE**.

AFTER THAT **FRIGHT** BACK THERE, SHANG-CHI, THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE **TRUE**.

WITH THE **INSTRUMENT PANEL** RIGHT IN FRONT OF US, WE'RE NOW PRIVILEGED TO FAH LO SUEE'S **COURSE** AND **APPROXIMATE DESTINATION**.

AND WITH THE **RADIO** RIGHT IN FRONT OF US, WE CAN TRANSMIT THE INFORMATION TO **SMITH**.

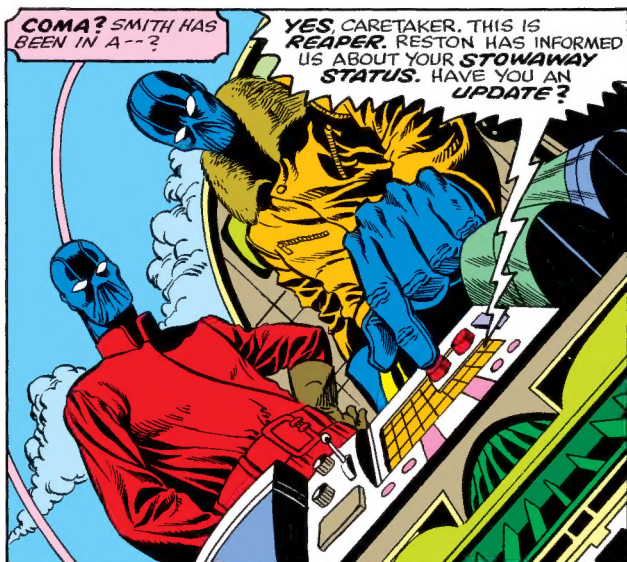
CALLING **MI-6** IN **LONDON**. THIS IS "**CARETAKER**" COME IN **LONDON**. **REPEAT**: THIS IS--



CARETAKER?!!
BUT WE THOUGHT
YOU WERE--

HOLD ON, CARETAKER!
"REAPER" HAS JUST
EMERGED FROM A COMA,
BUT I THINK HE'D WANT TO
HEAR THIS FOR HIMSELF--
EVEN IF HE WERE IN
HIS COFFIN.

I'LL TRY TO SWITCH
YOU OVER.



COMA? SMITH HAS
BEEN IN A--?

YES, CARETAKER. THIS IS
REAPER. RESTON HAS INFORMED
US ABOUT YOUR STOWAWAY
STATUS. HAVE YOU AN
UPDATE?



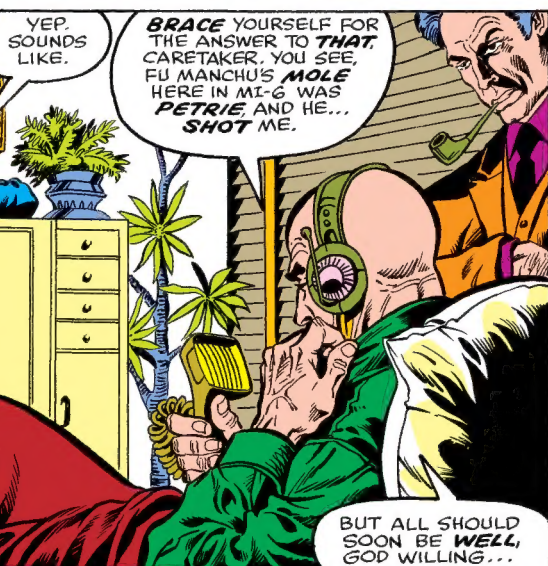
STATUS SAME EN
ROUTE TO FU MANCHU'S
FORTRESS IN THE
ARCTIC. COORDINATES
AS FOLLOWS: LONGI-
TITUDE, 169° WEST, LATI-
TITUDE, 89° NORTH.

HOW CAME
THE COMA?



SOUNDS LIKE LEIKO AND
THE CHINAMAN ARE STILL
KICKIN', LARNER.

YEP,
SOUNDS
LIKE.



BRACE YOURSELF FOR
THE ANSWER TO THAT,
CARETAKER. YOU SEE,
FU MANCHU'S MOLE
HERE IN MI-6 WAS
PETRIE. AND HE...
SHOT ME.

BUT ALL SHOULD
SOON BE WELL,
GOD WILLING...



"...AND THE GOOD DOCTOR IS RIGHT
NOW UNDERGOING A DE-PROGRAM-
MING REGIMEN VIA HYPNOSIS."

YOU ARE
DR. PETRIE-- SIR DENIS
NAYLAND SMITH'S AIDE
AND BEST FRIEND.
FU MANCHU IS YOUR ENEMY.

YOU HAVE OPPOSED
FU MANCHU WITH NOBLE
CAUSE FOR THE PAST FORTY
YEARS. YOU WILL REMEMBER
THIS FACT EVEN AFTER YOU
EMERGE FROM YOUR STATE OF
DEEP RELAXATION. FU MANCHU IS
EVIL... HE IS YOUR ENEMY...



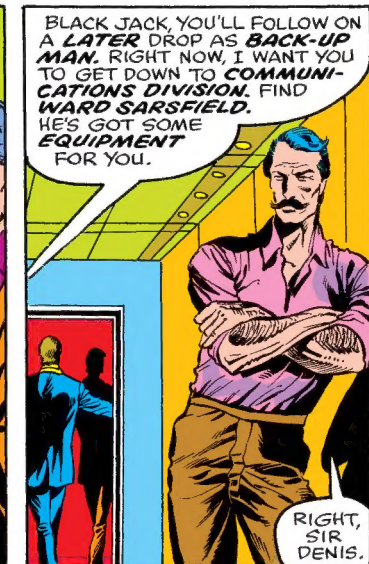
YES, CARETAKER, RESTON IS HERE, **SAFE AND SOUND**. GLAD TO HEAR YOU CONFIRM OUR **CLEARANCE** OF HIM.

AND BLACK JACK IS **ALSO** WELL. NEARLY **RECOVERED** FROM HIS INJURIES NOW. THAT IS ALL.

GOOD LUCK AND **OUT**.

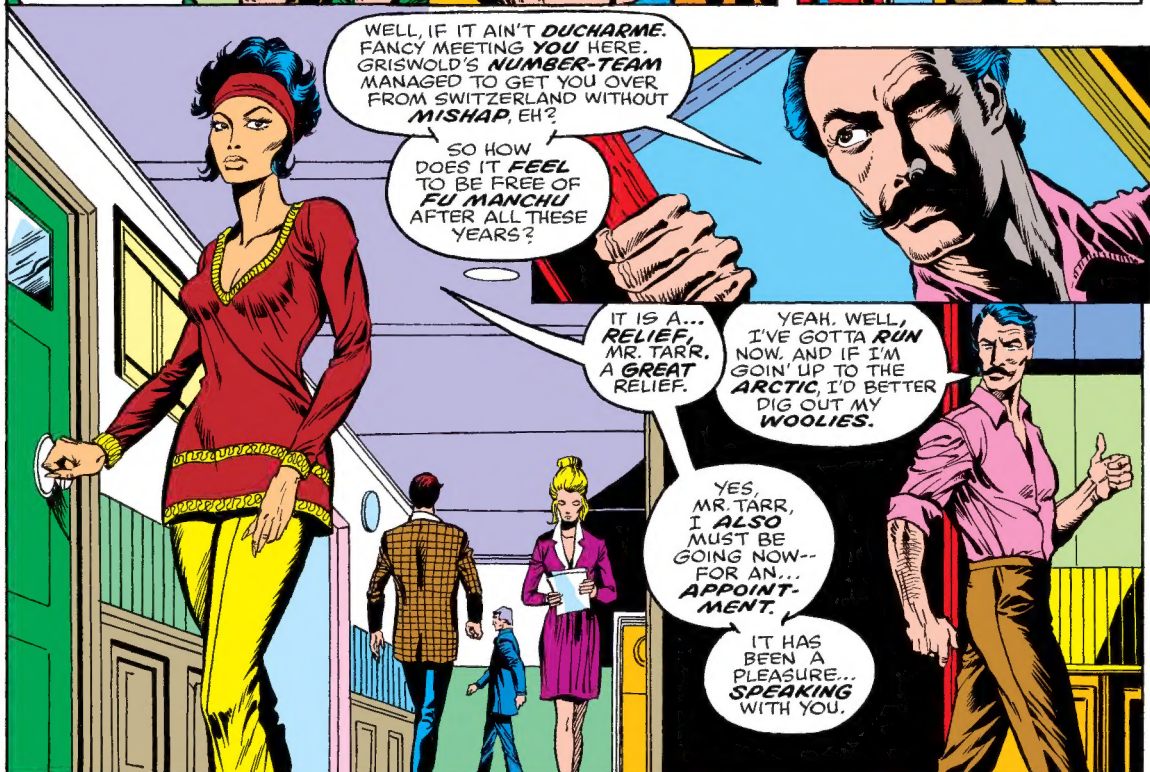


LARNER. RESTON. REQUISITION A **RECONNAISSANCE PLANE** AND GET UP TO THE **ARCTIC IMMEDIATELY**. IF **LEIKO** AND THE **LAD** ARE UNCOVERED, THEY'LL **NEED YOU**.



BLACK JACK, YOU'LL FOLLOW ON A **LATER DROP** AS **BACK-UP MAN**. RIGHT NOW, I WANT YOU TO GET DOWN TO **COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION**. FIND **WARD SARSFIELD**. HE'S GOT SOME **EQUIPMENT** FOR YOU.

RIGHT, SIR **DENIS**.



WELL, IF IT AIN'T **DUCHARME**. FANCY MEETING YOU HERE. **GRISWOLD'S NUMBER-TEAM** MANAGED TO GET YOU OVER FROM **SWITZERLAND** WITHOUT **MISHAP**, EH?

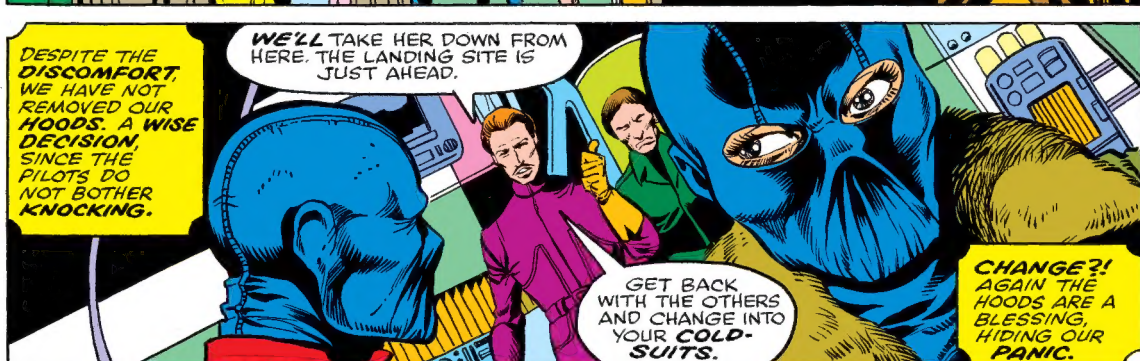
SO HOW DOES IT **FEEL** TO BE FREE OF **FU MANCHU** AFTER ALL THESE YEARS?

IT IS A... **RELIEF**, MR. **TARR**. A **GREAT RELIEF**.

YEAH. WELL, I'VE GOTTA **RUN** NOW. AND IF I'M GOIN' UP TO THE **ARCTIC**, I'D BETTER DIG OUT MY **WOOLIES**.

YES, MR. **TARR**, I **ALSO** MUST BE GOING NOW-- FOR AN... **APPOINTMENT**.

IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE... **SPEAKING** WITH YOU.



DESPITE THE DISCOMFORT, WE HAVE NOT REMOVED OUR **HOODS**. A **WISE DECISION**, SINCE THE **PILOTS** DO NOT BOTHER **KNOCKING**.

WE'LL TAKE HER DOWN FROM HERE. THE **LANDING SITE** IS JUST AHEAD.

GET BACK WITH THE OTHERS AND CHANGE INTO YOUR **COLD-SUITS**.

CHANGE?! AGAIN THE **HOODS** ARE A **BLESSING**, HIDING OUR **PANIC**.



BUT THE RESPITE IS ONLY **TEMPORARY**, FOR THE OTHERS HAVE ALREADY EXCHANGED THEIR ORIENTAL EXPEDITORS OUTFITS FOR **INSULATED PARKAS**...

...AND IF WE DO THE **SAME**, CHANGING IN **FRONT** OF THEM--!

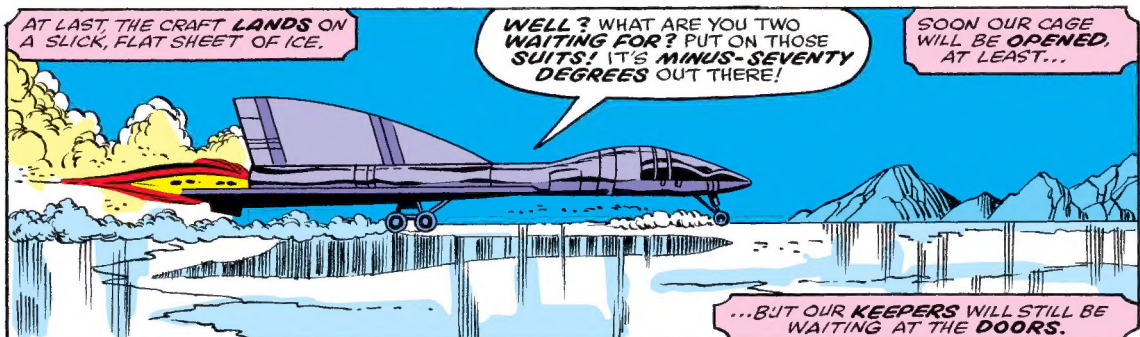


HERE. PUT ON YOUR **THERMO-SUITS**, AND WASTE NO **TIME** ABOUT IT.

BUT WE **CANNOT** PUT THEM ON.



AND SO WE... **HOLD** THEM, ATTEMPTING TO LOOK **INCONSPICUOUS**, BUT FAILING **MISERABLY**--AS IF WE WERE **NAKED IMPOSTERS** TRYING TO HIDE AMONG FULLY DRESSED **STORE WINDOW MANNIKINS**.



AT LAST, THE CRAFT **LANDS** ON A SLICK, FLAT SHEET OF ICE.

WELL? WHAT ARE YOU TWO WAITING FOR? PUT ON THOSE **SUITS**! IT'S **MINUS-SEVENTY DEGREES** OUT THERE!

SOON OUR CAGE WILL BE **OPENED**, AT LEAST...

...BUT OUR **KEEPERS** WILL STILL BE WAITING AT THE **DOORS**.



DID YOU NOT **HEAR** ME? I SAID IT'S **BLOODY WELL FREEZING** OUT THERE!

WHAT IS THE **TROUBLE**, GRISWOLD?

THESE TWO ARE **RELUCTANT** TO **SUIT UP**.



OH? AND WHO ARE "THESE TWO"?



IT'S OVER, THEN, OUR **SILENT BLUFF** IS CORNERED.

ANSWER ME! WHAT ARE YOUR **NAMES**?

WELL, IF YOU MUST **KNOW**, I SUSPECT OUR NAMES ARE--



--MUD. IT'S **HER!** **LEIKO WU!!**



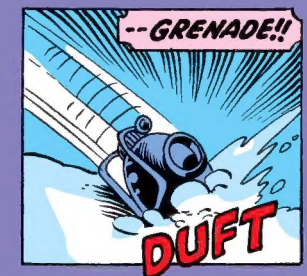


--BEFORE BREAKING INTO THE LONG, TERRIFIED, HOPELESS, RUN FOR **FREEDOM**, ANY FREEDOM, EVEN THAT OF A BARREN WASTELAND.

THE SNOW KICKS INTO STUNG SPRAYS AT OUR FEET... MISTS OUR FACES... MELTS IN OUR SWEAT.



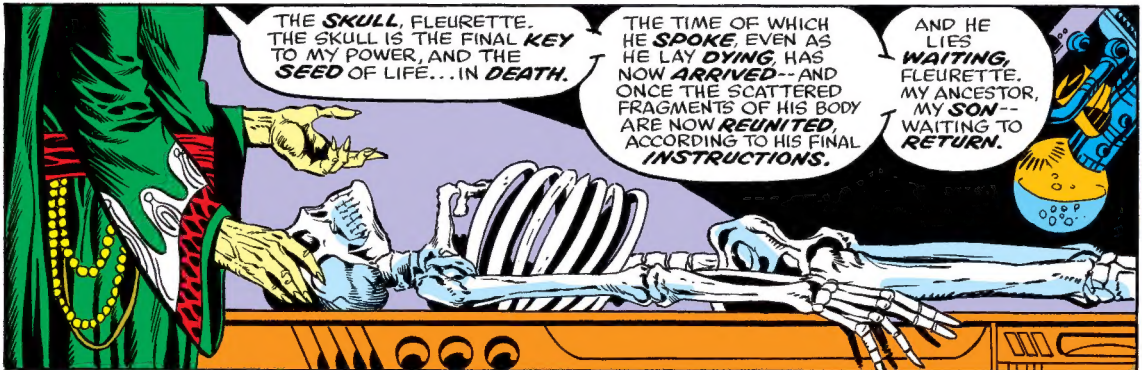
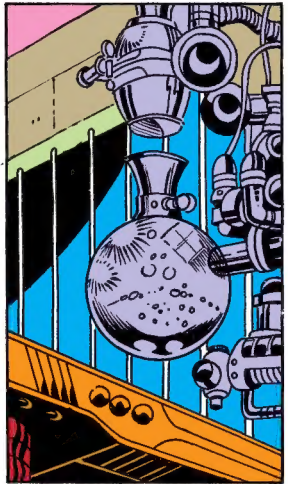
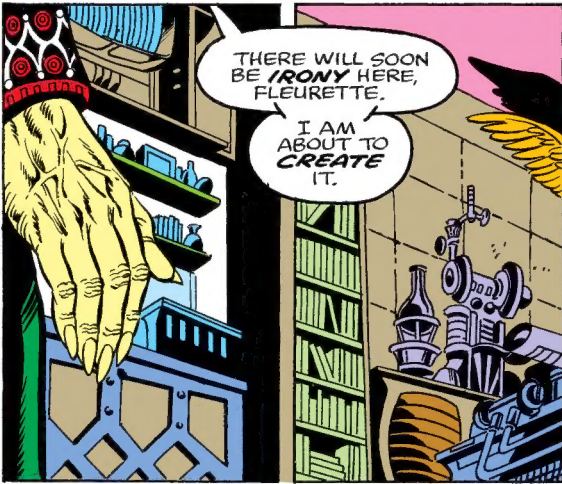
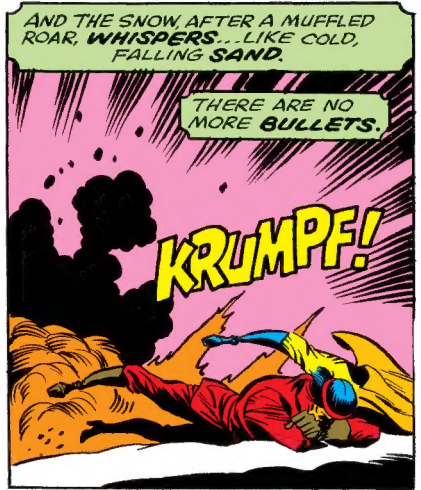
WE DARE NOT LOOK BACK, FOR FEAR OF SEEING--

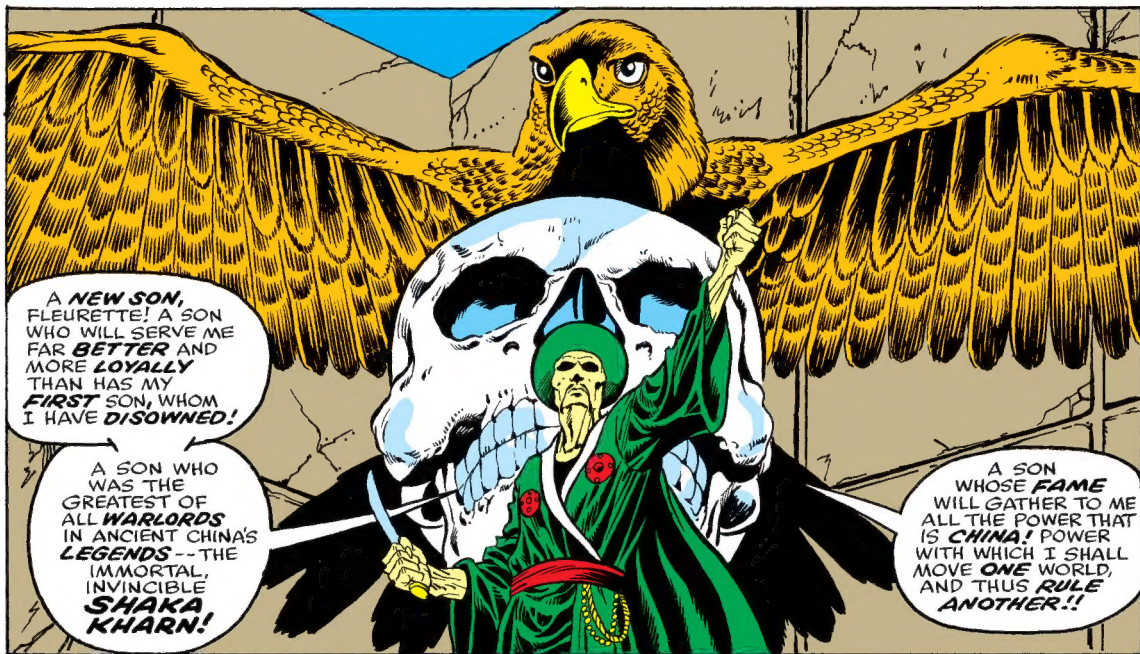


INSTINCT. A HAND DARTING DOWN, MY OWN HAND. HOW MANY SPLIT-SECONDS?

DEAD ANYWAY, EVEN WITHOUT THE TRY-- WHETHER THE HAND OR THE HEAD OR THE HEART IS THE FIRST TO **FEEL** THE SHOCK OF LOSS. AND THE BULLETS LEAVE NO CHOICE!



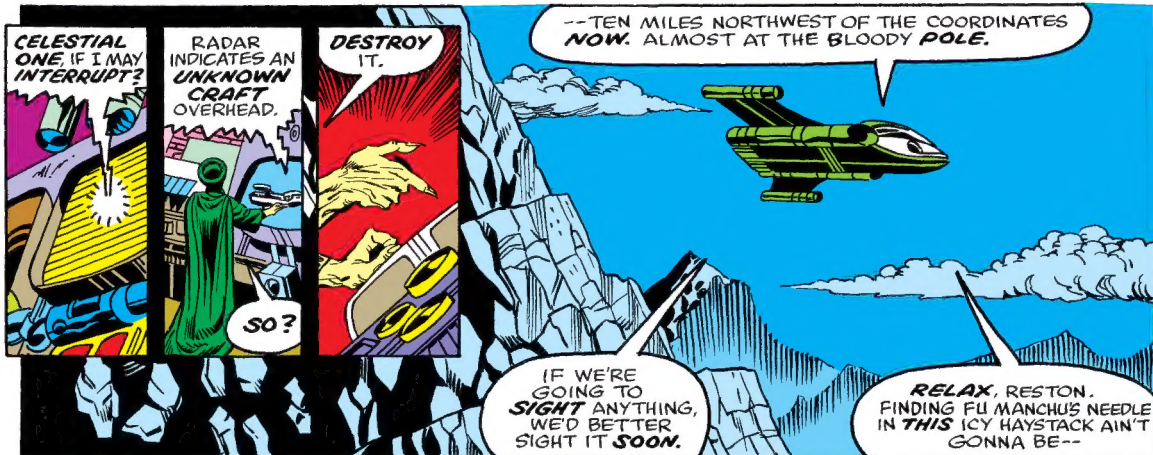




A NEW SON, FLEURETTE! A SON WHO WILL SERVE ME FAR **BETTER** AND MORE **LOYALLY** THAN HAS MY **FIRST** SON, WHOM I HAVE **DISOWNED!**

A SON WHO WAS THE GREATEST OF ALL **WARLORDS** IN ANCIENT CHINA'S **LEGENDS** -- THE IMMORTAL, INVINCIBLE **SHAKA KHARN!**

A SON WHOSE **FAME** WILL GATHER TO ME ALL THE POWER THAT IS **CHINA!** POWER WITH WHICH I SHALL MOVE **ONE** WORLD, AND THUS **RULE** ANOTHER!!



CELESTIAL ONE, IF I MAY INTERRUPT?

RADAR INDICATES AN **UNKNOWN CRAFT** OVERHEAD.

DESTROY IT.

SO?

--TEN MILES NORTHWEST OF THE COORDINATES NOW. ALMOST AT THE BLOODY POLE.

IF WE'RE GOING TO **SIGHT** ANYTHING, WE'D BETTER **SIGHT IT SOON.**

RELAX, RESTON. FINDING FU MANCHU'S NEEDLE IN THIS ICY HAYSTACK AIN'T GONNA BE--



SHEEOR



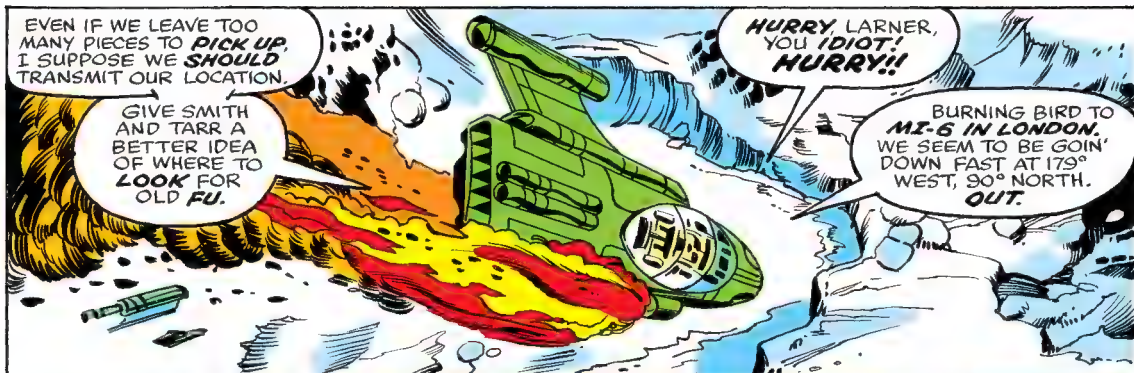
ZHRAKT



HOLY MOTHER OR--!! SOMETHING JUST RIPPED OFF THE STARBOARD WING!!

YEP.

WE'RE IN A DIVE!! QUICK, LARNER! RADIO SMITH AND GIVE HIM OUR COORDINATES!!



EVEN IF WE LEAVE TOO MANY PIECES TO **PICK UP**, I SUPPOSE WE **SHOULD** TRANSMIT OUR LOCATION.

GIVE SMITH AND TARR A BETTER IDEA OF WHERE TO **LOOK FOR** OLD FU.

HURRY, LARNER, YOU IDIOT! HURRY!!

BURNING BIRD TO **MZ-6 IN LONDON**. WE SEEM TO BE GOIN' DOWN FAST AT 179° WEST, 90° NORTH. **OUT.**



SEE, RESTON? I DIDN'T CUT IT SO CLO--

SHRAMM!!!

WE FOLLOW THE EXPEDITION AT A **DISCREET DISTANCE**-- AFTER FLEEING AND **ELUDING** THEM.

EIGHT FELL TO THE **GRENADE**, BUT FAH LO SUEE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN **TOO UPSET**-- OR SHE WOULDN'T HAVE ENDED THE SEARCH SO **QUICKLY!**

BUT THEN, PERHAPS SHE'S SIMPLY **EAGER** TO REACH HER **FATHER...**



SOME **ROUTINE**. WAIT TILL THEY REACH THE **NEXT PEAK**. **DESCEND** MOUNT **THAT PEAK**, AND WAIT **AGAIN**.

"THIS 'TRADECRIFT' IS A **LOUSY** BUSINESS SHANG-CHI.

YES.



NIGHT LASTS **SIX MONTHS** UP HERE. THEY **RECOGNIZE** IT, FINALLY AND **ARBITRARILY**, BY **PITCHING CAMP**.



UP HERE, WHERE IT'S **COLDER**, WE'LL DO THE SAME-- BUT **MORE POORLY**.

THERE WAS A SMALL CAVE IN THE CLIFF-FACE SEVERAL HUNDRED METERS BACK--

VERY WELL, LEIKO.

THE SNOW HISSES
IN THE WIND, SWIRLING
BEFORE THE NARROW
ENTRANCE TO OUR
REFUGE... LIKE
PHANTOM SAND.

SHANG-CHI, KNEELS IN A
SUPPLE CROUCH, IT WILL BE
WARMER WITH OUR BODIES
CLOSE.

BUT RIGHT NOW, I
AM **ALONE**, AND THERE
IS **FEAR**... THOUGH
I BEGAN **WITHOUT**
IT.

RHYTHMS **CHANGE**
AND DAWNS **FADE**...
YOUTH **AGES** AND
MEMORIES ARE
FORGOTTEN...
BUT HE... HE
REMAINS THE
SAME.

YOUR INTENSITY
NEVER **WANES**.
SHANG-CHI, YOUR
STRENGTH NEVER
LEAVES YOU. NO
MATTER **WHAT**
HAPPENS, YOU **WITH-**
STAND IT. YOU ALWAYS
STAY THE **SAME.**

ON THE **SURFACE**,
PERHAPS... BUT THE
SURFACE IS A **MASK**,
LEIKO.

ONLY I CAN SEE
BEHIND THAT MASK,
AND KNOW THAT IT
IS A **LIE.**

YOUR MASK IS
LESS ELABORATE,
LEIKO, LESS
DECEITFUL-- AND
THUS, PERHAPS
YOUR SPIRIT IS
STRONGER THAN
MINE.

DON'T **SAY** THAT,
SHANG-CHI. I
COULDN'T **FACE** IT,
EVEN IF IT WERE
TRUE. I **DEPEND** ON
YOU, I **NEED** YOU.
SO DON'T **SAY** IT.

DON'T **SAY**
ANYTHING,
SHANG-CHI...

...JUST...
KISS ME...

MELTING.

LIKE...
PHANTOM
SAND...



DAY: THOUGH IT IS STILL DARK, I WONDER IF THE FALLEN CRAFT THEY HAVE DISCOVERED... IS ONE OF OURS.



YOU WILL **ENTER** THE WRECKAGE, AS **ORDERED**. AND YOU WILL BRING OUT THE **BODIES**.

THEY WERE OBVIOUSLY SHOT DOWN BY MY FATHER. AND IF THEY STILL **LIVE**, THEY MAY BE ABLE TO TELL US HIS **PRECISE** LOCATION.



SORRY, LARNER... BUT COULDN'T HELP IT... WITH-OUT THE WING... COULDN'T PULL HER UP... IN TIME...

SO... IT IS OUR OLD FRIEND AGAIN.



REMARKABLE. SMITH MUST HAVE BELIEVED YOU ABOUT THE **SPIDERS**, AND HOW I **FRAMED** YOU.

BUT I TRUST YOU CAN STILL TASTE MY **KISS**?
GO TO THE **DEVIL**, FAH LO SUEE-- AND SIT ON HIS **HOT HORNS**!



RESTON. AND LARNER.

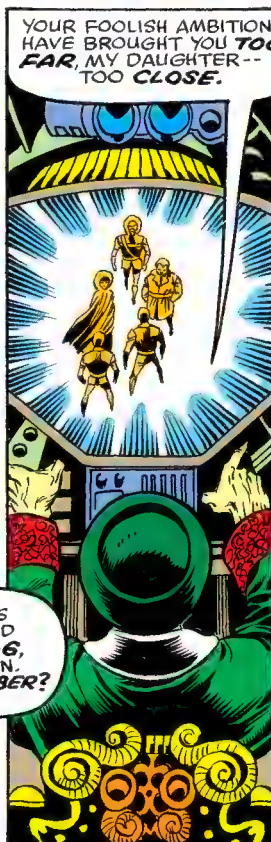
YES, WHICH MEANS **ABANDONING** OUR TACTICS, SHANG-CHI. NO MORE FOLLOWING AT A **DIS-CREET** DISTANCE WE'LL HAVE TO GO RIGHT DOWN THERE AND **RESCUE** THEM... **SOMEHOW**.

HOW DOES CLIVE MANAGE IT?



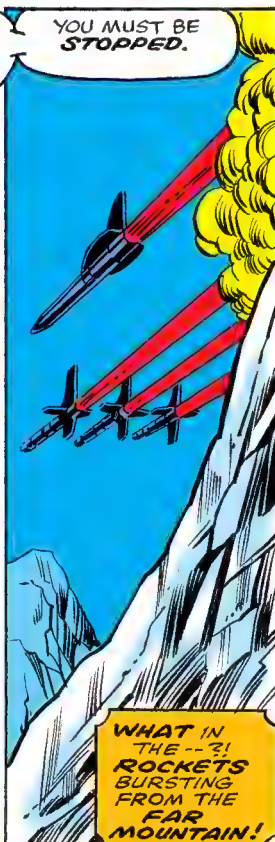
EVERY TIME.
--OUR OWN **SUICIDE** IF WE DON'T KILL THEM **THIS** TIME!

WHERE'D YOU DEVELOPE YOUR **HUNGER** FOR BLOOD, GRIZZLY?
HE WAS TRAINED BY **MI-6**, RESTON. REMEMBER?



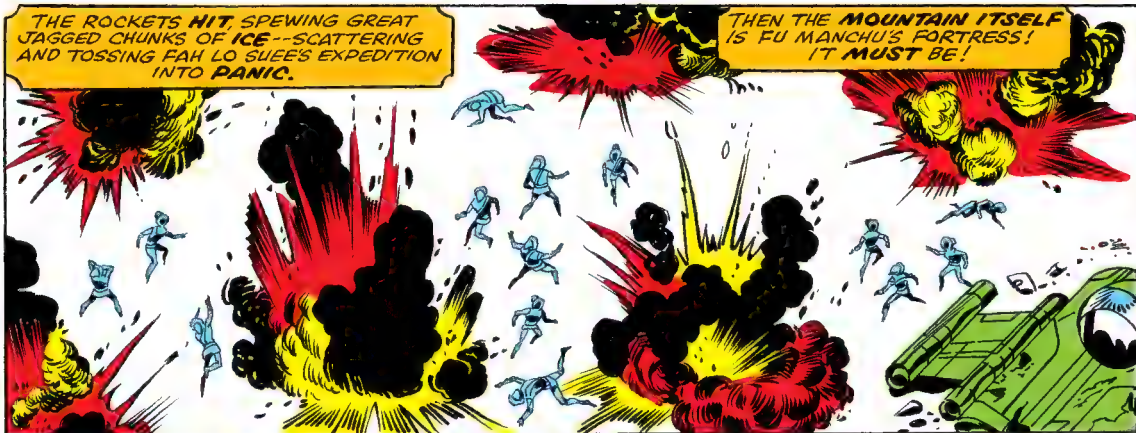
YOUR FOOLISH AMBITIONS HAVE BROUGHT YOU **TOO FAR**, MY DAUGHTER-- **TOO CLOSE**.

YOUR FOOLISH AMBITIONS HAVE BROUGHT YOU **TOO FAR**, MY DAUGHTER-- **TOO CLOSE**.



YOU MUST BE **STOPPED**.

WHAT IN THE--?! **ROCKETS** BURSTING FROM THE **FAR MOUNTAIN**!



THE ROCKETS HIT, SPEWING GREAT JAGGED CHUNKS OF ICE--SCATTERING AND TOSSING FAH LO SUEE'S EXPEDITION INTO PANIC.

THEN THE MOUNTAIN ITSELF IS FU MANCHU'S FORTRESS! IT MUST BE!



YES. A SECTION OF THE ICE SLIDES OPEN, DISGORING A SQUAD OF FLYING MEN.

FU MANCHU'S DEATH ANGELS--JETPACKED SI-FAN ASSASSINS.



THEY SWOOP AND DIVE AT FAH LO SUEE'S MEN, KILLING THEM WITH THE SMOOTH EFFICIENCY OF ROBOTS. SHANG-CHI'S EYES NARROW, THEN HARDEN, AS HE WATCHES.



GOOD TIMING EH LARNER? DID YOU PICK UP A GUN?

OF COURSE. THE FIRST ONE THAT FELL. SAY! OVER THERE, RESTON.

YEAH, I SEE. LOOKS LIKE GRISWOLD'S HAD ENOUGH.





HE KNEW
IT.

HE SPINS, KICKS.
THE JETPACK
COUGHS. THE
ANGEL HALTS.

AND
FALLS.



CHI! OVER HERE!!
AND HURRY!
BEFORE THEY
NAIL YOU!!

THEY WON'T NAIL
'IM, RESTON.

NOT HIM.
THE KID'S
CHARMED.



THE GUNSHOTS DIMINISH,
FADING TO CHOPPY, INTER-
MITTENT CRACKS...

MY SISTER--
SHE SLIPPED
AWAY...

YES, WE SAW
HER, SHANG.
WE'LL PICK
HER UP
WHEN THIS
IS OVER.



WE STOP BEHIND A FAR DRIFT,
BUT THE SOUND CARRIES WELL...

YOU HAVE DEFECTED FROM
THE GLORIOUS SERVICE OF
CELESTIAL FU MANCHU TO
FOLLOW HIS TRAITOROUS
DAUGHTER. SOME OF YOU
HAVE EVEN REVEALED THE
CELESTIAL ONE'S PRESENT
LOCATION TO FAH LO SUEE.

FOR THIS YOU DESERVE TO
DIE SLOWLY. BUT FU MANCHU
IS WILLING TO FORGIVE YOUR
TREACHERY, AND OFFERS YOU
THE OPPORTUNITY TO REJOIN
HIS ELITE CORPS OF SI-FAN.

THOSE WHO STILL
LIVE ACCEPT
THE ULTIMATUM.
HUMBLY-- BUT
EAGERLY.

THUS, AFTER YEARS OF PLANNING, FAH LO SUEE'S CAREFULLY MOUNTED GAMBIT HAS BEEN **CRUSHED** IN LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES.

YOUR MEN ARE BEING TAKEN INTO THE MOUNTAIN, FAH LO SUEE, THEY'VE QUIT YOU.

YOU'RE **ALONE** AND YOU'VE BEEN **DEFEATED**. I DON'T KNOW **WHY**, BUT YOUR BROTHER SHANG-CHI IS WILLING TO HELP YOU **ESCAPE**.

SO IF YOU WANT TO **JOIN** US, **COME ON**.

SHE IS **DAZED**, BUT MOVES **TOWARD** US.

WELL, LOOKS LIKE THE SIDES ARE FINALLY **DRAWN**-- **EVERYONE** IN THE WORLD AGAINST **FU MANCHU**.

WONDER WHY I GET THE FEELING THAT **HE'LL WIN**?

BECAUSE YOU'RE GOOD WITH **HUNCHES**, RESTON, AND YOU NEVER SIDE AGAINST THE **ODDS**.

--WE HERE IN THE **COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION** ARE EXCEEDINGLY **PROUD** OF THIS LITTLE DEVICE, MR. TARR.

IT IS A **MINIATURE TRANSMITTER** WHICH YOU WILL WEAR ATTACHED TO YOUR **CHEST**, RIGHT OVER THE UPPERMOST POINT OF YOUR **STERNUM**.

IN OTHER WORDS, SARSFIELD, IT'S A **WIRELESS MICROPHONE**.

INDEED! BUT ONE CAPABLE OF PICKING UP AND TRANSMITTING YOUR SLIGHTEST **WHISPER!**

AND NOT ONLY WILL YOUR TRANSMISSIONS BE **RECEIVED** HERE, BUT THEY WILL ALSO BE **SIMULTANEOUSLY TAPED** FOR FUTURE **REFERENCE**.

THUS YOU CAN TRANSMIT **PROGRESS REPORTS** DIRECTLY FROM THE FIELD, DESCRIBING YOUR **ACTIONS, LOCALE, SITUATION**--

--AND ANY **OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION** RIGHT UP TO THE POSSIBLE, OR EVEN PROBABLE, **END**.

MEANING THAT IF I'M **LOST** IN THE FIELD--

CORRECT, MR. TARR. WE WILL POSSESS ALL THE KNOWLEDGE YOU POSSESSED AT THE MOMENT OF YOUR DEATH. THUS, YOUR FOOLHARDY SACRIFICE-- IF SUCH IT SHOULD PROVE TO BE-- WILL NOT BE IN VAIN, AND YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WILL NOT BE LOST.

INDEED, THEY WILL BE **RECORDED** FOR ALL TIME, AS YOUR PERSONAL LEGACY TO **POSTERITY**, RIGHT UP TO YOUR FINAL GASP, GROAN, OR **SCREAM**, AS THE CASE MAY BE.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO **MACABRE** ABOUT IT, SARSFIELD. STILL... I JUST SAW **DUCHARME** OUT IN THE **HALL**. YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN THE **RELIEF** ON HER FACE...

...NOW THAT SHE'S **FREE** OF FU MANCHU. SO I GUESS MY DEATH'LL BE **WORTH** IT, IF **OTHERS** ARE FREED OF THAT **FIEND**.



SO YOU'RE READY TO SPILL THE BEANS TO THE **GOOD GUYS**, ARE YA, LADY? WELL, AFTER THE **WHIPPING** YOU JUST TOOK, GUESS I DON'T **BLAME** YOU.

JUST WHAT **ARE** FU MANCHU'S PLANS, **ANYWAY**? WHAT'S HE **UP** TO THAT'S SO **BLOODY EARTH-SHAKING**?

MY **FATHER**, MR. LARNER--



--PLANS TO **HURL** THE **MOON** OUT OF ITS **ORBIT**.

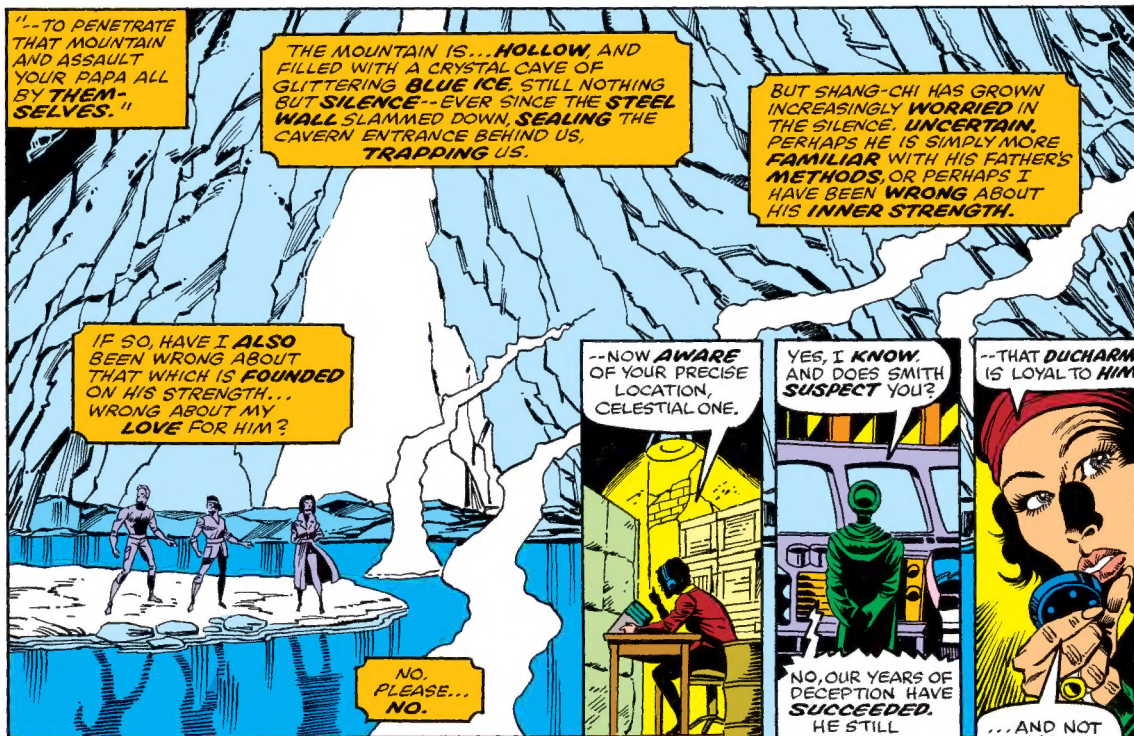


WELL, I GUESS Y'CAN'T ACCUSE THE GUY OF TAKIN' THE **EASY** ROUTE TO WORLD CONQUEST.

BUT BEFORE YOU SPILL ANY **MORE** OF THIS FAIRY TALE, LADY, I THINK I'LL TAKE A LOOK FOR **TARR'S PLANE**.

HOPE THE **BALDING OX** **HURRIES**. IT'S **BLOODY** WELL **FRIGID** UP HERE.

AND I HOPE THE **OTHER THREE** KNOW WHAT THEY'RE **DOING**, GOING OFF **HALF-COCKED**--



"--TO **PENETRATE** THAT **MOUNTAIN** AND **ASSAULT** YOUR **PAPA** ALL BY **THEMSELVES**."

THE **MOUNTAIN** IS... **HOLLOW**, AND FILLED WITH A **CRYSTAL CAVE** OF **GLITTERING BLUE ICE**. STILL **NOTHING** BUT **SILENCE**--EVER SINCE THE **STEEL WALL** SLAMMED DOWN, **SEALING** THE **CAVERN** ENTRANCE BEHIND US, **TRAPPING** US.

BUT **SHANG-CHI** HAS GROWN **INCREASINGLY WORRIED** IN THE **SILENCE**. **UNCERTAIN**. PERHAPS HE IS **SIMPLY MORE FAMILIAR** WITH HIS **FATHER'S METHODS**. OR PERHAPS I HAVE BEEN **WRONG** ABOUT HIS **INNER STRENGTH**.

IF SO, HAVE I **ALSO** BEEN **WRONG** ABOUT THAT WHICH IS **FOUNDED** ON HIS **STRENGTH**... **WRONG** ABOUT MY **LOVE** FOR HIM?

NO. PLEASE... NO.

--NOW **AWARE** OF YOUR **PRECISE** LOCATION, **CELESTIAL ONE**.

YES, I **KNOW**. AND DOES **SMITH** **SUSPECT** YOU?

--THAT **DUCHARME** IS **LOYAL** TO **HIM**...

NO, OUR YEARS OF **DECEPTION** HAVE **SUCCEEDED**. HE STILL **BELIEVES**--

...AND NOT TO **YOU**.

NEXT: THE MOST CRUCIAL **TURNING POINT** THUS FAR IN **SHANG-CHI'S** LIFE, WHEN HE **BATTLES** LITERALLY **IMPOSSIBLE ODDS** ON A **CAUSEWAY** **SPANNING DOOM** IN--

PART IV (BLACK JACK TARR):
CITY **TOP** **OF** **THE WORLD!**

MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

Dear People:

I believe that Doug Moench and Paul Gulacy, like Denny O'Neil and Neal Adams with GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW, have reached a new peak in comic book storytelling with MASTER OF KUNG FU. Indeed, Gulacy and Moench have surpassed the rigid structure of the simple comic magazine, converting static panels into fluidly cinematic breakdowns. Reading each issue is like going to a good movie. This is just what a comic *should* be—film on paper.

True, this sort of storytelling began with Will Eisner's SPIRIT in the forties, and matured with Jim Steranko's NICK FURY, AGENT OF SHIELD in the sixties, but it is now perfected in Moench and Gulacy's MASTER OF KUNG FU. And why not? Jack Kirby resorted to drawing comics when he found he couldn't get into the medium of movies; comics were his outlet for filmic expression. Thus, the circle is now complete; movies to comics and comics to movies.

More particularly: Since the dawn of martial arts popularity, a surprisingly high number of kung fu comics have been created. Eight, to be exact. But right from the start there has been one truly worthy of mention: MASTER OF KUNG FU. Doug Moench is perfect for Paul Gulacy's art. Time and again he has written stories paralleling and surpassing the quality of the better James Bond flicks, as well as ENTER THE DRAGON. In fact, Moench has succeeded in evolving the most original and interesting martial arts hero in all of comics. Shang-Chi is the next best thing to Bruce Lee—and that's not something to be taken lightly!

For me, MASTER OF KUNG FU is a dream-come-true. I've collected comics for eleven years, followed the martial arts in film and in life for four years, and have been a yellow belt in Tae Kwon Do karate for one month. (Aw, shucks.) And I'll bet that many readers don't realize that MASTER OF KUNG FU is the only martial arts comic extant which regularly displays actual kung fu movement and dynamics, as well as philosophy. All of the other seven comics are awkward imitations of the spirit of kung fu.

Paul Gulacy and Doug Moench: Thank you!

Steven Feldman
224 Bowen Street
Providence, RI 02906

Wazoo, Steve, but you've lumped us in with mighty fine company indeed. In fact, the titles you mentioned (SPIRIT, NICK FURY, & GL/GA) are in the top five of both Doug and Paul's All-Time Favorite Comics lists! And, of course, it's already a well-known fact that the two spunky lads are confirmed Fleming/Bond freaks.

But as for ENTER THE DRAGON...well, Doug and Paul have been dodging *that* subject for quite some time. But finally they are able to collectively speak their minds and clear the air. Why is that, you ask? Because they finally managed to see the blamed flick! Yes, that's right; until a month or two past, Paul had drawn every issue of MOKF without benefit of ENTER THE DRAGON-type inspiration. But he finally caught it—at an Ohio drive-in, no less—and *man*, is that Gulacy chap ever *inspired*! (Take it from us; the fight sequences in future issues of this book ain't gonna be believed!

And, yes, until exactly two weeks ago as of this babbling, Doug had (gasp!) never seen Bruce Lee in action. But on his recent wedding sojourn in home-town Chicago, he, too, caught ENTER THE DRAGON—in the company of new bride Deb James...er, *Moench*, best man Don McGregor (who also hails from Rhode Island, Steve), and Tai Chi instructor Ron Lasner.

You're breathless, right? Waiting to know what Gulacy and Moench thought about the legendary ENTER THE DRAGON, right? Well, we've already eaten up too much of this space

(which rightfully belongs to your letters) to really get into it. But we *will* mention that the boys went bananas for days afterward, racking up 3 or 4 twenty-dollar Pennsylvania/Ohio phone calls in a none too mild discussion of a pretty nice movie.

Wow! Talk about eating up space! We don't even have room for our follow-up comments on your basic film/comics analogy, mentioning how Billy Friedkin has often confessed that the inspiration for his superbly cinematic car/elevated train race in THE FRENCH CONNECTION derived from a similar sequence in Eisner's SPIRIT, and how everyone at "Busy" Arnold's 1940's comic book factory went insane over Orson Welles' CITIZEN KANE, and how Bernie Krigstein's EC story "Master Race" is one of the most cinematic... (Aw, heck; we'd better shut up now before we start getting carried away!

HTD WEEKLY CAMPAIGN UPDATE #2:

---Unless you've dwelt in a cave for the past six months and have confined your reading strictly to rare, out-of-print editions of Lin Carter novels, you're probably aware that Marvel's feathered fury, HOWARD THE DUCK, has flung his battered hat into this year's presidential sweepstakes. This lemon-hued rectangle contains the second in our series of feeble reports on our wondrous waterfowl's winding woad to the White House.

---TRAGEDY STRIKES DUCK CAMPAIGN; Terre Haute, Ind. (UDI) Danger has become a constant companion to presidential hopefuls, and HTD is no exception. Last week, during the course of a single 30-minute address before the Society of Landlocked Seaweed Enthusiasts here in Terre Haute, *eleven* separate attempts were made to snuff the Duck. Weapons ranged from a letter-bomb skimmed through the air as a paper plane to an exploding cigar with a nuclear triggering device. Ten of these assassination attempts were abortive. The eleventh—involving a bottle of Crazy Glue, a box of Wheat Thins, and an expandable watchband—irreparably scarred one Milos Pitt, a member of the audience. Pitt, already confined to a wheelchair as a result of his participation in the Nixon campaign of '72, found himself directly in the line of fire and unable to dodge. He later commented bitterly, "Sure wish I'd been wearin' one o' them 'Git Down' buttons. Then the watchband would'a bounced right off." Shucks!



---KRASS KOMMERICALISM KORNER: Yes, you can still attach yourself or your clothing to the Official HTD For President Button pictured above. The price is \$1.00 plus 25¢ postage and handling per button.

---KRASS KOMMERICALISM KORNER, Part Two: If even the button is insufficient to express your fowl ardor, may we recommend our new HTD CAMPAIGN PORTRAIT, produced in association with Magic Mountain Books? Classier than a poster, it's reproduced in subtle sepia on heavy stock, suitable for framing. It, too, is just a buck, plus that inevitable 25¢ for postage and handling. And both the button and portrait are available from Howard's campaign manager:

STEVE GERBER
c/o Mad Genius Associates
850 Seventh Avenue, Rm. 806
New York, NY 10019

(Make all checks payable to Steve; he's still saving up for a copy of HTD #1.) Another report in seven days!